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The Plot Against Hitler

—Anne Fremantle

THE

Commonweal

Liturgical Reform

by H. A. Reinhold

Death in Indochina

by Howard R. Simpson

Volume LX, No. 17 July 30, 1954 Twenty Cents

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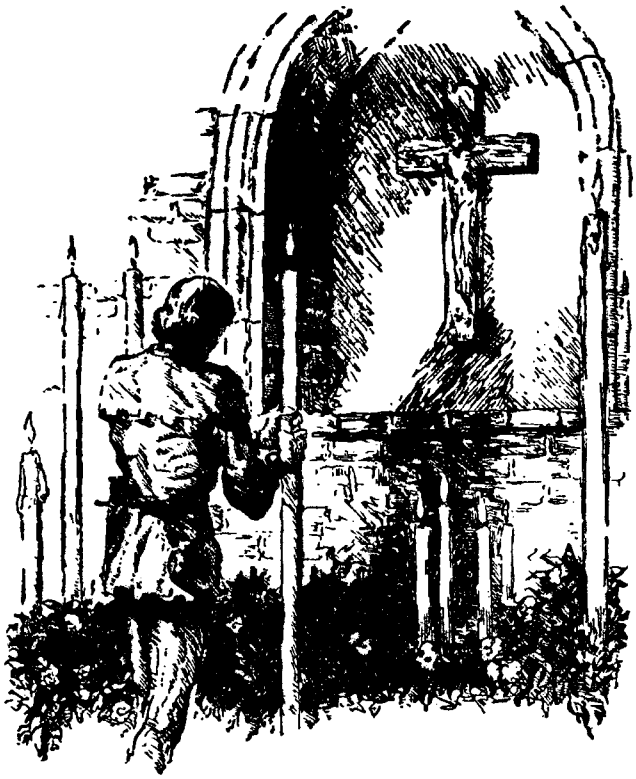

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386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1954, in the U. S. A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

U. S. and Canada, $7 a year. Foreign, $9. Single copies, 20c.

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THE

Commonweal

week by week

HEALTH IN THE MIDDLE

PRESIDENT Eisenhower visualizes himself as a political middle-of-the-roader. As he once put it, he hopes his Administration will be liberal in all matters affecting individual human welfare and conservative in matters involving economics. As formulas for success go, this one went rather well—as demonstrated by Mr. Eisenhower's showing at the polls.

Theoretically, at least, a position that is billed as middle-of-the-road should be able to pick up a great deal of support, since almost everyone, no matter how fanatic, likes to think of himself in this fashion. In practice, however, a middle-of-the-road position on many issues satisfies practically no one—a fact which Congress recently demonstrated to the President in voting on his health plan.

The Eisenhower health proposal was a far cry from the old national health insurance plan pushed by Mr. Truman. In part, this is because it takes into account the sweeping changes of recent years. During the last fifteen years, private prepaid hospitalization and medical-surgical plans have mushroomed. The membership of organizations like Blue Cross and Blue Shield has risen from less than ten million in 1939 to over ninety million today. Yet, encouraging as these figures are, serious problems still exist.

One of the major problems arises from the fact that those who need health insurance most can afford it least. At the present time, three out of four families with annual incomes of $2000 or less do not have health insurance in any form. It is easy enough for those outside to say such families should have it, no matter what the cost, or for the family itself—after the fact of illness—to wish other things had been sacrificed in favor of health insurance. The fact remains that families with incomes of $2000 or less should have many things which they do not in fact have, from more orange juice to baby shoes.

Another serious problem in connection with health insurance is the selectivity of the membership of such programs. Many people who want to join cannot get in, and older people in particular find it next to impossible to get the kind of coverage they need. Present health plans are also unable to handle adequately the problem of long-term illnesses like heart disease or cancer, although such diseases are at the present time on the increase in this country.

MR. Eisenhower's proposed health program would not have eliminated these problems nor even come near to solving most of them. But it was seen as a start, an effort to meet a real problem.

Primarily, the Administration's health bill was aimed at meeting the problem of rising medical costs. Action here was especially necessary in connection with catastrophic illnesses, an area where insurance plans now fear to extend their coverage. The basic idea of the Administration measure was simply to encourage health insurance companies and groups, both non-profit and commercial, to provide more extensive coverage. This was to be done by means of a Federal insurance program designed to insure the health insurance groups against crippling losses.

On the mechanical level, the Eisenhower program would have set up in the Treasury an initial capital fund of $25 million. Then the officially approved companies would have extended existing coverage to areas where they now fear to go, to low-income groups, people over-age by present standards and the like. If the health groups suffered abnormal losses as a result of the new and wider coverage, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare could in turn pay them three-quarters of the amount lost from the general fund. Eventually it was visualized that this fund would become self-sustaining, with the government acting only as a kind of caretaker, as the re-insurance premiums paid by the participating companies mounted up.

It must be admitted that no one was quite sure exactly how this would all work out, but there was some sentiment, outside of Congress at any rate, in favor of giving it a try. Many who supported it

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seemed to do so on the general principle that something is better than nothing.

When the measure reached the floor, however, the House roundly rejected Administration pleas on behalf of the bill. It is apparently impossible for any Administration, Republican or Democratic, to offer a proposal in this area which will meet with the approval of the AMA. The AMA had denounced Mr. Truman's more sweeping proposals as "socialized medicine," and they treated the Eisenhower proposal as the opening wedge for the same thing. From that point on, conservative Republicans in the house would have nothing to do with it, despite the Eisenhower label.

On the other side of the aisle, liberal Democrats were equally suspicious of the measure, but for vastly different reasons. Some saw it as a scheme to enrich the private insurance companies. Many thought the bill was poorly drawn in the first place. In general, Fair Deal Democrats thought the bill fell far short of meeting the nation's health needs. Its passage, they thought, would only confuse the issue further and delay any consideration of more adequate measures.

Once conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats combined against it, the fate of the health bill was sealed. By a vote of 238 to 139, the bill was sent back to committee. By all reasonable expectations, it is dead for this session.

Whether or not this incident will sow in President Eisenhower's mind any doubts about his "middle-of-the-road" program we do not pretend to know. Certainly it raises questions in our minds.

NEXT WEEK

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN writes about the character—and implications—of family life in the Latin countries.

"The Latin family is not only more united than the family in northern Europe, it is more of a closed entity. In the Latin countries shutters jealously closed at night and high walls indicate a desire to ward off the indiscreet observation of the outsider, and contrasts with the low hedges, frequent absence of gates, and open windows of the northern home. To be invited to dinner by a family in north Europe means little; it is a superficial courtesy extended even to complete strangers. But to be invited to dinner in a Latin family means a great deal more, and implies a certain intimacy. For the southerner, the Latin family is something as intimate as is the individual internal world of the northerner, a private place where he does not easily let other people enter."

Is a position which cannot win substantial support from both sides of the aisle in the United States really a middle-of-the-road position? Or is it just a watered-down version of something else which in its final stage can please no one? Too much of the Administration's program, we fear, is based upon an erroneous idea. In housing, in foreign aid, in defense spending, for example, the President's advisers apparently operate on the principle that cutting back on previous goals adds up to a middle-of-the-road position. According to this view, simply lowering our national sights all along the line is an act of statesmanlike compromise.

For our part, we very seriously doubt the possibility of putting into effect any dynamic program in this fashion. You just cannot have a dynamic program without dynamite. The fate of the health program indicates that measures which interest a minority only mildly and command the enthusiastic support of no one cannot succeed.

RED CHINA AND THE UN

WHY, indeed, does Red China want to be admitted into the United Nations? The answer seems fairly obvious that Red China does not want to enter the UN in order to promote collective security (against whom?) or to advance the peaceful interests of mankind. Red China wants acceptance into the UN in order to pursue her own national and ideological aims. Those aims are not in the interest of the United States (nor indeed in the interests of the UN); they are in the interests of strengthening Communist influence throughout Asia.

Then, a second question, why should the UN and its membership want Red China? The motives behind the insistence of the Soviet bloc are not hard to fathom. It would certainly be to the advantage of the Communist half of the world to have the Chinese vote support Communist rather than anti-Communist interests in the UN. It would likewise be to the disadvantage of the anti-Communist nations.

It is also argued that as a political fact in the world today China is clearly Red China. It is utterly ridiculous, many claim, for the Formosa diplomats to represent a nation where they no longer have any power. If China is to be represented in the UN, it is said, let it be the real China of today.

There is a great deal of force in this latter argument, but is it strong enough to convince Americans that they should add another enemy to the power balance in the UN? What we want of the UN is an opportunity to work for peace and against

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aggression in the world. It would seem that to accept China, which has so recently been branded as an aggressor by the UN and whose "volunteers" so recently went to war against UN soldiers, would be foolhardy.

It is not a question of setting up abstract moral requirements for UN membership. It is not a question of asking nations to pass purity tests before we will deal with them. There may be intransigent Americans arguing against Red China's acceptance on these terms, but essentially it is not a question of intransigence. It is a very practical political question: Will admittance of Communist China aid or hamper what the United States as a member of the United Nations is trying to do at this time?

We can fumble the ball, of course, so that the whole question is turned into a psychological victory for the Soviets. We can give the impression that we are stonily intransigent and so unwilling to face political realities that we verge on fanaticism and are a danger to world peace. That is precisely the image of America which the Communists would like our friends and the world's neutrals to adopt.

But this is so unnecessary. To indulge the American tendency toward moralism at this time would be to throw away our advantage. We should make ourselves clear. We have a strong political case.

Red China has acted violently against the UN; it has made no subsequent efforts to "purge" itself in order to gain UN respect; it still holds UN soldiers; it put up all kinds of obstacles to a UN peace in Korea; it has given absolutely no indication that it is interested in promoting UN aims in the world; it promises to contribute nothing but obstacles to what the UN is trying to do.

Things may not always be that way. Red China may change. We hope so. Red China may eventually earn, if not UN applause, at least a good conduct pass. When that happens, we will be willing to discuss the question again. But it is Red China itself which has put itself outside the pale by its so-recent action against the UN. It is only Red China itself which, by convincing behavior over a period of time, can earn consideration. In the meantime, the U. S. is staying in the UN—but, let it be known, the U. S. wants Red China kept out.

TUNISIA AND MOROCCO

IT has frequently been pointed out that in North Africa the French have all the ingredients of a new Indochina. But the repetition does not seem to have influenced Frenchmen very deeply. In North Africa the French face nationalists, newly educated in the standards and political history of Western Europe, bitter at the record of France's occupation of their lands, demanding that they and their countrymen be given control of their national destiny. Among the nationalists are moderate and responsible men; among them too are irresponsible elements, devoted to violence as the only effective course of action (why they have been driven to fanaticism is another question). Some nationalists have associations with the Arab League, some are Communists. As the nationalist movement is frustrated, so the influence of the moderates wanes. To any student of the Viet Minh in the first postwar years, the story is not unfamiliar.

The French have commercial interests in North Africa, as they have in Indochina. Tunisia and Morocco are considered part of the French nation; in the words of Pierre Mendes-France, they are part of the "body and soul of France." The French residents of the two protectorates claim that their contribution to the development of the area ought to give them special status.

The French response to this tension has been regularly, studiously, inadequate. First, police measures are used to suppress the nationalists; when that fails, concessions are made, but after violence, the concessions come too late.

Since the coming to office of Pierre Voizard, Resident General of Tunisia, some progress has been made in meeting nationalist demands. Probably inadequate, his reform plan was at least a beginning and there was a chance that it would have worked. But a flare-up of nationalist violence interrupted negotiations this spring and has bred counter-violence.

In Morocco, the situation is considerably worse than in Tunisia. The nationalists are more traditional and more unyielding. Bombings, assassinations and public disorder have been on the increase since the French deposed the former Sultan, a man sympathetic to the nationalists. French protestations of friendship and willingness to grant self-government ring rather hollowly when they replace native rulers by fiat.

Mendes-France has North Africa on his list. If he survives his pledged deadline at Geneva, unknown at this writing, he has promised to turn his attentions to Africa. He favors reform, but also is dedicated to keeping the two protectorates a part of France. Whether this will work is an open question, as events in India and Pakistan—and Burma and Indonesia and Indochina—would seem to have proved that the way to lose a colony is to demand that it remain tied to the colonizer; while the single hope of keeping a rebelling colony within a union is by giving it freedom to get out. The French have shown little sign of recognizing this lesson.

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CONFORMITY

IN Europe a few journalists have spread the idea that Americans are living in a reign of terror. We are supposed to be afraid of everything but fear; the only Americans speaking out these days are the conformists, the book-burners and the super-patriots, it is said. But it just isn't so.

The usual commencement addresses were given and honorary degrees handed out last month, and, to judge from press reports, academic America went on a non-conformist binge. In every case we heard of, speakers advised youth not to conform (conform to what was never made quite clear) but to strike out on new paths. Probably never before were so many young people urged by their elders to revolt.

It is sometimes said that the shadow of fear has settled over campuses, but no indication is forthcoming from the academic meetings we read about. It appears that all you have to do is put three or four professors together in a room these days and they will produce an anti-McCarthy resolution before you can say Cohn and Schine. The professors may be timid and undaring when isolated in their own classrooms, as is charged, but *en bloc* they are still the resolution-passing, non-conforming demons they always were.

We have noted no shortage of violent exchange on radio and TV panels, and no noticeable increase in clarity, either. The butcher-paper weeklies, like this one, and the iconoclastic little-magazines continue to come out. A new example of the latter has belligerently taken the name of *Dissent*. Let McCarthy put *that* in his pipe! Greenwich Village rents are still high.

There has been no shortage of long letters to the New York *Times* and hardy Bronxites named Turk the Jerk and Sick-Up-to-Here still hurl magnificent insults at each other in the *Daily News*. The old liberal team (how familiar those names!) are still not frightened off from signing paid ads in the morning papers, and if one is to judge from the sermons and Communion-breakfast speeches reported in Monday's *Times,* the clergy have not been silenced, either. Norman Thomas, needling all sides, is a TV panel favorite, and Ammon Hennacy yet writes lengthy letters to the *Catholic Worker* explaining why he won't pay any taxes.

Who's conforming?

TRIESTE SETTLEMENT

THE Trieste controversy, which last fall precipitated riots and troop movements, and even threatened to bring an armed clash between Italian and Yugoslav forces, now has subsided to a point where a settlement may be possible.

In a matter like this passions must first be disentangled. You don't make settlements at a time when the two antagonists stand facing each other, pistols in hand, each demanding the vindication of his honor. Unfortunately, the historic dispute over Trieste had been permitted to reach the appearance of the point of pistols and honor.

There is reason to think that Marshal Tito was not so indignant as were his rioting students. He encouraged the outcry and disorders, but when it came time to stop, he stopped, with the efficiency for which dictators are noted. Yugoslavia will accept the settlement Marshal Tito decides to accept.

Public opinion in Italy is not so easily turned off. If Italy makes concessions, as the proposed terms require it to do, it will be a result of unusual political courage displayed by Premier Mario Scelba. Italy held the territory from the end of the first World War until 1947 (from 1382 to 1919 it had belonged to Austria), and the city of Trieste is predominantly an Italian city. The surrounding territory is chiefly Slovenian, a fact which is the principal basis for the Yugoslav claims.

Under the reported terms of settlement, Italy would get the port city and Zone A—slightly less than half of the total disputed area, from the present Italian border to a line just south of the town of Muggia. Yugoslavia would get Zone B, and with American financial assistance the port of Capodistria would be built up as an outlet to the sea for Yugoslavia. Zone B is already under Yugoslav occupation and Zone A is controlled by an Anglo-American military administration which works closely with the Italian government. Thus the settlement, except in the city of Trieste where Yugoslavia would have only certain trade privileges, is a rationalization of the status quo.

Trouble would be certain to continue, as there are Italian minorities in Zone B and people of Yugoslav descent and sympathies in Zone A. However, an official settlement would help to put these disputes into perspective, and the exercise of good will on both sides could end any major cause for tension. It is in the interest of both nations to display that good will, for the settlement would bring great economic advantages to both. A new spirit between the two would considerably strengthen NATO's Mediterranean shoulder: Turkey, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Italy. This was the reason the United States, in the attractive person of Ambassador Clare Boothe Luce, took upon itself a major part in negotiating the terms of an agreement which deserves to be accepted. At least these few embers can be doused in our enkindled world.

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Liturgical Reform

EACH CHANGE CAUSES CONSTERNATION AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE THE NOTION THAT THE CHURCH WAS NOT ONLY FOUNDED ON A ROCK BUT *IS* A ROCK.

H. A. REINHOLD

THE average Catholic has a deep feeling of security in matters of faith, morals and Church discipline. He grows up under the steady hand of parents, priests and teachers who appeal to a firm and solid teaching guaranteed by the Holy Spirit, the Soul of Christ's Body, the Church. People who suggest that there is any area in the Church that needs pruning or weeding are often suspect to him, because it is just such talk that started schisms and heresies. Luther objected to questionable practices of one friar who misrepresented the correct doctrine of indulgences and got away with it, and see what happened! Luther found himself in a new sect and after him there were hundreds of more splits in this creation of rebellion and "reform."

And yet, we have just seen the canonization of a great reformer: Pius X. He cast out a rich and luxurious growth of Church music and introduced a sober and devout music in its stead—at least, he tried. He threw overboard the traditions and customs of two hundred and fifty years concerning Holy Communion: the age of First Communion, the frequency with which the Sacrament might be received, and the rigoristic atmosphere surrounding it. He thereby created consternation in many circles. I remember an old priest who twenty-five years after Pius' reform still refused to unlock the tabernacle on weekdays. He thought the poor Pope, now Saint Pius, had been ill-advised and the whole thing would die down.

Each reform somehow rocks the boat and creates consternation among those who have a notion that the Church was not only founded on a rock but *is* a rock, while our Lord clearly said that the Church is like a seed that grows, like a leaven that moves the whole mass, or, in other words, is just the opposite of a stony, immobile dead thing.

The present Holy Father has built up a record of reforms that in some ways equals his sainted predecessor's. And what happened? Did we, clergy and laity, greet his generous and magnanimous gestures with enthusiasm? Did we show that we understood the Pope's intentions? Think of the cool reception the restoration of the Easter Vigil received. I bet that twenty-five years from now there will still be parishes in which such "new-fangled" ideas are strictly out. Weren't some of us almost ungracious about the gift of Evening Mass and the easing of the Eucharistic fast? And these are the reforms or adjustments made for the benefit of the average faithful. I won't even mention those which affected us less. Do we, through our churlishness, want to force the Holy See to go so slow that the result will be "too little, too late"? And this while the enemy is poised for the final onslaught?

Last fall experts from all over the globe met in the beautiful Swiss resort town of Lugano to discuss the needs for further adaptation and adjustment in one particular field: pastoral liturgy, or, in plainer English, parish worship. The proper authorities from Rome were represented. Cardinals and bishops attended and expressed their approval. Experts like the famous Austrian Jesuit, Father A. J. Jungmann, and the venerable Belgian scholar, Abbot Capelle, were heard. Besides them, less learned priests and laymen, like myself, were allowed to read papers and participate in the discussions. Rome wanted to hear bishops, pastors, laymen, and scholars and to hear what they really thought about liturgical reforms.

Two questions were up for discussion: the Mass and Holy Week, because it is generally felt that these are the two most pressing issues.

The restoration of the Easter Vigil touched on both issues, because it not only put the service back where it belongs, it not only made it possible for people to take part in it, but it also did something to the Mass itself: it cut out the prayers at the foot of the altar and eliminated the last Gospel. Since that Mass is a singular one, these changes might be shrugged off as the liturgical particularities of this one day. But during the Lugano conference it became clear that the old demand for "reform" of the Mass was really on the minds of the authorities who made the change. The Easter Vigil changes were not made in order to go back to a kind of golden age of the liturgy, when the Mass was simpler and easier for the congregation to understand. It was not done to have the Mass in

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its original form, as some nostalgic self-appointed "reformers" demand, for its original form is the Last Supper—no Lesson, no Gospel, no Offertory. The Mass grew as time went on until around A.D. 1570 when the dangers of the times required that it be "deep-frozen," as it was after certain disfiguring outgrowths of medieval arbitrariness that had crept into it in some regions were weeded out.

In the judgment of the Holy See the time seems to have come to take the Mass out of that deep freeze, to thaw it and adjust it to the needs of the people. (The same is true about Holy Week.) We have better liturgical scholars today than were available in 1570 to show us what is essential and what not, to point out what was piled on and what grew, where this or the other thing originated. The need for a Mass which is more meaningful to those who attend it was never more urgent.

THE two most impressive speakers at the Lugano conference were the Bishop of Berlin, ninety per cent of whose diocese is in the Soviet zone, and a missionary, Father Hofinger, S.J., who teaches refugee seminarians from Red China in a seminary in the Philippines. Going to Mass on Sunday, both these men insisted, must become an "experience" for all in the congregation, uplifting, heartening, moving and immediate. If it remains a mere performance to avoid mortal sin or to follow a custom, then people will cease to come when coming means peril, persecution or even grave inconvenience. Either you meet the living Christ in word and sacrament on Sunday, or you meet yourself—and this latter possibility isn't worth risking your job or even missing a fishing trip.

Saint Pius X opened the way for Mass sung by the people (or, as a substitute, "dialogued") and close participation in Holy Communion. Evening Mass increased the opportunity for many to attend Mass. The new fast regulations made it possible for more to receive Holy Communion during Mass. Where the decrees have been carried out, people have become conscious of a last obstacle. Where these decrees have not been carried out, people are not conscious of anything. Woe to those who delay and drag their feet, because there will be a sudden awakening, as it came to the French and Italian Bishops who discovered such shocking figures as only five per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women making their Easter "duties"!

The barriers that prevent the people from reaching closer union with the altar and the priest from establishing immediate communication with his congregation consist of many things which the average Catholic has come to take for granted. There is, first, the impression that the priest, turning his back on his audience, is busy with his own work; and, feeling left out of it, the people naturally resort to their own devices: prayer books, rosaries, mental prayer, devout day-dreaming. Even more than this: the priest reads aloud for all to hear (at least he is commanded by the rubrics to read "audibly") and a very few understand him, speaking as he does in a foreign tongue. If you have a missal you can make out what he reads to you, but many priests can't be heard or are too fast to keep up with. They seem to assume that nobody is listening. Then there are the bewildering ceremonies that, even when explained, are hard to grasp, like the one with the empty paten after the Lord's Prayer or the sign of the cross over the already consecrated Sacred Host and chalice.

To put it briefly: the general outline is obscured, the climaxes, Gospel and Consecration, have too much competition. In 1570 the commission in charge did not have the means to decide what was superfluous, what was growth, what should be discarded, but by generations of patient research, starting in the seventeenth century with men like Mabillon, the scholars now can sift the wheat from the chaff. The Easter Vigil is the first case in which we can see what is to be cast off for the benefit of souls, and what is to be retained.

The hardest problem, of course, is that of the liturgical language. I personally fear that the opposition to having the parts that are addressed to the people translated into the vernacular is still formidable. Opponents are either so comfortably settled in the Latin tradition that they don't even see the problem, or they fear that we will lose our culture, or that the laity will be shocked, or that the use of the vernacular will jeopardize the unity of at least the Latin part of the Universal Church. But basically what the opponents of the vernacular don't seem to comprehend is that the "fore-Mass," up to the Gospel, is, and was meant to be, a service of prayer, reading, praise and instruction and derives from the synagogue, not from the cenacle, at least not in its present form. But just as I have been surprised by the thorough reform of the psalter and the Easter Vigil, in my heart of hearts I really hope to be wrong again and see the Holy See running well ahead of the timid.

Gathering up my mental notes made while reading over the last twenty years and while listening to the scholars at Lugano last September, I would like to describe what to expect in the Mass of the future. (Remember please that I am on my own and not divulging anything the Holy Father or Cardinal Micara whispered into my ear.)

SUPPOSE reforms were carried through and you went to Sunday Mass in your parish church, for we are talking about ordinary parish churches, not about cathedrals or abbeys. The priest and his servers enter the sanctuary while the congregation sings a hymn

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fashioned on the general lines of the *Introit,* unless there is a choir to sing the *Introit.* All are alerted and the entrance of the priest is given a high significance. If you are late, you know it!

The priest and the congregation alternate the *Kyrie* (or a short litany of the same inspiration) and from the floor of the sanctuary the congregation is greeted with the customary "The Lord be with you," followed first by silent individual prayer, which is concluded with our existing Collect (no commemorations at any time). Then the priest bids the people be seated and reads them the Epistle, or lesson, from the pulpit or a lectern, so that all can hear and understand. It has been proposed that there should be a "four-year course" of lessons giving all of the New and much of the Old Testament, instead of our present one-year course of little snatches and bits from both. This reading will be followed by a short homily and a congregational hymn inspired by our present gradual and *Alleluia* or Tract. Where there is a choir, it will probably continue the Gradual, etc.

Then the priest carries the Gospel book in procession from the altar to the pulpit, accompanied by candles and incense, and announces the Gospel. Here too a four-year course is contemplated. A homily or instruction on the Gospel follows.

Now that even the late-comers have been disposed in their hearts through the Word of God, it should be time to recognize our own shortcomings; therefore Father Jungmann suggests that a short and well-chosen *Confiteor* with one absolution should be recited here, and not in the beginning as is now the case. On major feasts this confession is followed by a profession of faith in the form of the *Creed.*

As of now the "Oremus" before the Offertory stands alone: no prayer follows, because a beautiful litany of intercession for the clergy, the laity, the government, the poor, the rich, the imprisoned, was lost. The last sample is left on Good Friday. It is therefore proposed to restore this prayer and announce special intentions. This would be the place for the Bishop's "imperata."

The silent prayers of the priest during the Offertory would be shortened and corrected and some of them (*Suscipe,* etc., *Trinitas, Lavabo, Orate fratres*) be dropped entirely, but the "secreta" would be recited aloud or sung. As a general rule, the silent prayers would remain in Latin all through the Mass. The people would not gain anything by their being rendered in the vernacular and in many instances, especially in the Canon, a good translation actually defies the efforts of the best scholars.

There are many more readjustments, some already mentioned in passing, but too many to fit into the frame of this article. From the samples given it is obvious that instead of being soothing, the parish Mass would become stirring, challenging, calling forth cooperation, union of minds, meditation and reflection. Its connection with Catholic Action would become tangible even to the dullest brethren.

THE same spirit, the same intention of drawing every soul into Christ's mysteries, of feeding the hungry spiritually, prevails in the imminent reform of Holy Week, which now, to nine out of ten Catholics, is but a sacred pageant, less an example of true Mystery than of mysteriousness. Who has not asked himself: Why does the priest alone receive Holy Communion on Good Friday? The answer is: because the rubrics say so and rubrics say so because of a long line of events that shaped the present rite. So the pastors and experts in Lugano pleaded: Let us either give Communion to all or drop altogether this remnant of a long-defunct Lenten Communion service.

Taking the features of the new Easter Vigil as a guide, different speakers pleaded for such reforms as to make Holy Week something with the appeal of popular devotions, close to Biblical sources, taking a sounder psychological approach to modern man. Shortening of the endless and repetitious prayers over the palms on Palm Sunday, a procession in which all would participate; a Mass for Bishop and clergy to consecrate the Holy Oils on Thursday morning; an Evening Mass incorporating the washing of the feet; a general absolution as a counterpart to the taking of the ashes, general Communion and a less solemn transfer of the Blessed Sacrament (because of the present confusion, many faithful regard the repository as a sepulchre—twelve or more hours before the Crucifixion!).

These are only scattered remarks. The proposals made may all be rejected by the only authority to decide, the Holy See, or many of them may be accepted. As Catholics we will unquestioningly accept the decision made by the proper authority. But if we feel we are getting "too little too late" the reason is obvious: we have failed to make the majority conscious of these problems and no Pontiff can disregard the fact that reforms remain a dead letter unless the ground is prepared for the seed. There is no doubt that we Catholics who live in comfort and peace do not feel the urgency, and the heart and mind for change, as much as the lonely faithful in the red flood of atheism or the missionaries to whom the present state of the Liturgy sometimes seems more hindrance than help.

I personally hope that Pope Pius XII will put the needs of the persecuted and the missionary above the temporary discomfort of the already overly comfortable. The comfortable who have the leisure to think up objections and make mindless appeals to tradition will simply have to start considering those who now go to Masses hard to understand, and go at the risk of their jobs, careers, and even lives.

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The Plot Against Hitler

ANNE FREMANTLE

"THE seat of the treason in each case is the same — the inner conviction of the accused that what he is doing is right." Alan Moorehead, in *The Traitors,* thus takes issue with the postulate of the American philosopher Josiah Royce that each "individual retains the inalienable duty to decide wherein his own loyalty lies." This contradiction may well be the dividing or the uniting factor in the two persons recently bracketed by *Time,* Senator McCarthy and Dr. Robert Oppenheimer. It is also basic to the understanding of an event which took place ten years ago, almost to the day—the *Putsch* against Hitler of July 20, 1944.

Described by the U.S. Office of War Information in an official broadcast on the same evening as having been the work of "a very small clique of ambitious officers," the *Putsch* actually involved many thousands of men, coming from five very different nuclei: the army, the church, the civil service, the landed gentry, and the trade unions. A most remarkable fact about this revolt, and one which distinguishes it from any of the revolts made by the Resistance groups against Hitler or Mussolini in the occupied countries, is the fact that it was never tainted with Communism, nor even accused by its direct enemies of being Communist-inspired or of including Communist sympathizers. (Indeed, when the Communists were informed by the conspirators of their aims, a matter of a few days before the bomb was thrown, the plans were immediately betrayed. Whether this betrayal came from the Communists themselves, or merely from Gestapo stooges planted among them, will probably never be known; it is known the Gestapo had thoroughly permeated the Communist ranks, and many of the Gestapo informers and torturers fled to East Germany after the German defeat.)

Doubtless there were some opportunists among the men of the *Putsch,* yet for most the words spoken by Von Tresckow as he was about to die rang true: "Everybody will now turn upon us and cover us with abuse. But my conviction remains unshaken. We have done the right thing. Hitler is not only the archenemy of Germany, he is the archenemy of the whole world. Whoever joined the Resistance movement had to realize that his life was doomed. A man's moral value begins only when he is prepared to sacrifice his life for his convictions."

SACRIFICE their lives they certainly did. After the failure of the plot more than 7,000 were arrested; more than 4,980 were shot, hanged or tortured to death, and many more would have been but for the Allied victory. In 1946, 250,000 survivors who had been in prison for political reasons were registered; all were Reich Germans. In Plotzensee prison 300 men were hanged in one night—the executioners had to stop for a while after the 186th from sheer fatigue. In Brandenburg 3,800 were killed, and at Buchenwald at war's end were found many relatives of the "men of the 20th of July" imprisoned through *Sippenhaft*—because of kinship; in 1945 there were, for example, ten Stauffenbergs, eight Goerdelers, and so on.

Most of those executed after the *Putsch* were tortured to death. Mrs. Otto Kiep, widow of the German consul at New York and now herself a consul, tells how she saw her husband shortly before he was killed, and because of what had been done to him, was glad it would soon be over. Adam von Trott, a young Rhodes scholar in the German Foreign Office, took sixty minutes hanging, and Hitler had a film made of his agony and that of many others, a film now in this country.

From the first, the resistance within Germany had only one aim: to liquidate Nazism. Until 1938 there was tremendous opposition to war by all the anti-Hitler groups; they knew that most Germans really believed the stab-in-the-back theory, according to which the first World War was lost only because of the revolution within Germany. Once Germany was involved in a war, they realized, the regime would benefit from the loyalty of all Germans. As a result, all anti-Nazi Germans were especially anxious to keep out of war. But in the Nazi dictatorship, civilians were totally unable to obtain arms, and when they approached the Army, the answer was: "You civilians elected Hitler; we in the Army have no vote. It's up to those who let him in to get him out."

Many of the General Staff were converted from this attitude only by their experience of the atrocities committed in Poland. For some, the writing on the wall had come earlier, in the form of the alliance with Russia; these latter were drawn from those who had once sincerely accepted Nazism as the one bulwark against Communism. Still others were not brought into opposition until the Russian campaign, with its mixture of

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cruelty and stupidity; among these were several Generals and at least one Admiral, as well as many diplomats.

Gradually, as time went on, the various anti-Hitler groups grew aware of each other. But in view of the fact that, as Dr. Ley put it, "there is no such thing as a private individual in National Socialist Germany" and that merely to show "no evidence of Nazi activity" was itself considered "potential resistance," cooperation between the groups always remained minimal. Wives were told nothing, and, as far as possible, members of the different groups did not know each other's names, lest, under torture, they betray. In Germany, as in German-occupied countries, twenty-four hours was the longest anyone was expected to hold out under Gestapo torture.

TWO men were perhaps the outstanding leaders of the German Resistance. The first was Goederler, of the purely political "breakers," as the men of the Underground were called by Allen Dulles in his reports home. The second was Helmut von Moltke, the center of the Kreisau Circle, so called after his estate in East Prussia. Around Moltke were grouped many young aristocrats, both Catholic and Protestant, all belonging to the noblest and most historic of German families. Through their many soldier and diplomat members, the "breakers" were able to communicate with the Allied leaders through neutral powers until 1943. In 1942 von Moltke wrote to a friend in England of the loosening of "the beast in man," and one Jesuit wrote to another abroad that the real problem was not Hitler, but "the capacity to be infected by Hitler."

Until the war, the various groups had been divided as to what should be done. Some feared to make a martyr of Hitler. Others, like Admiral Canaris, felt that "an even greater misfortune would be the triumph of Hitler." The main object of the Kreisau Circle, whose members were all convinced Christians, and who gradually emerged as the core of the whole *Putsch,* was "to lay the groundwork for a post-Nazi Germany. . . . No *Putsch* could in itself heal the deep-seated evil." (Dr. Hans Rothfels. *The German Opposition to Hitler.* Regnery.)

In 1939 Adam von Trott zu Solz, a member of the Kreisau Circle, brought to the U.S. a memorandum from the German Underground. This document, which he delivered to Lord Lothian, stressed the "dire necessity of the German people to back the (Hitler) regime in its war against the alleged intentions of the Allied powers to destroy Germany" and urged the Allied powers to make clear to Germany that "continued National Socialist control is the chief obstacle to peaceful survival." By removal of the government "a tolerable position for Germany in a new Europe could be secured." Dr. Bruning so far agreed with this memorandum that he visited the White House in December 1939 to beg President Roosevelt to consider it.

In May, 1942, the Bishop of Chichester met two German pastors in Stockholm, Hans Schonfeld and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, both members of the Underground. They asked the Bishop whether the Allies would be willing to treat with a *bona fide* German government for a peace settlement if Hitler were overthrown. Anthony Eden on July 17 replied that "no action could be taken." As late as November, 1942, Allen Dulles met several of the "breakers" in Switzerland, among them Gisevius and Struenk, but the Allied demand for unconditional surrender, made at Casablanca early in 1943, put an end to any hope the German Resistance had of building the "other Germany" from the ruins of the Third Reich. Thereafter, though all were determined to go on, it was solely as Christians.

"If we claim to be Christians," Pastor Bonhoeffer said, "there is no room for expediency. Hitler is anti-Christ and we must eliminate him whether he be successful or not." And as Allen Dulles admitted, "the conspirators went ahead, not now in the hope of securing better peace terms, but solely because the duty to cleanse their own house was an absolute one. It was not conditional upon the help and promises of others."

THE extent to which the conspirators were consciously Christian is well brought out by Father Reuss, S.J., who throughout the war years was the German Jesuit Provincial. He describes Count von Moltke asking to meet him:

"Inside a garage in a back street a man said, 'Good evening,' so I replied, 'Gruss Gott.' He asked, 'Why do you say Gruss Gott?' I replied, 'First, because I am a religious, and that is a religious greeting: God should be greeted. Second, because I am a Bavarian, and that is how we greet in Bavaria. Lastly, because times are bad, and this is no good evening.' He laughed. I knew who he was, of course, and he knew who I was. 'Why did you, Count Moltke, a Prussian and a Protestant, want to see me? What can we have to say to one another?' He told me, 'We have one Bishop in Saxony who is good. A few pastors—very few. All the rest are compromised, completely compromised. The Evangelical Church in Germany belongs to Hitler. Therefore we must work with you, we who want to save Germany,

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and German Christendom.' So I asked him, 'For what do you work?' He replied, 'For the removal of Hitler.' I asked, 'By death or without death?' He answered, 'Without death. The German army must capture him and hold him prisoner.'

"I told him, 'You are an idealist, Count Moltke. The Generals will not seize Hitler while he is victorious. Why should they? He gives them glory. And if he is defeated, and they seize him, the people will blame you, because he was victorious before. And I will not join in any plot to murder him. Not that I might not, for there is the last stand against tyranny, and it is all in St. Thomas. But I do not want my Church or my Society involved in his death or in scandal.' Then Count Moltke reiterated that it was to be 'without death.' "

THIS attitude of the Kreisau Kreis, that "the totalitarian claim of the state could only be overcome by an other-worldly totalitarianism," led Count Moltke himself to regard resistance not so much as aiming at getting people to overthrow the regime as in preparing each member to realize they were "personally responsible for every savage act that has been done, not in a mortal way, but as Christians."

"Our case histories provide documentary proof that it is neither plots nor plans but the very spirit of man that is to be hunted down," Count Moltke wrote in his last great letter to his wife [The Commonweal, March 4, 1949]. "I stood before Freisler not as a Protestant, not as a great landowner, not as a noble, not as a Prussian, not as a German even. . . . No, I stood there as a Christian and as nothing else."

This Christian commitment led the Count to "praise God for having so wonderfully molded His unworthy vessel . . . at the very moment when the danger became acute that I might be drawn into active preparation for an uprising, I was removed so that I was and still am innocent of all connection with the use of violence."

Count Moltke was imprisoned in January, 1944. Already the Gestapo had eliminated many of the conspirators. Two Foreign Office girls—aristocrats—had been beheaded as early as 1940, and three men hanged, one above his own desk at the office; in October, 1943 Schulze Boysen, his wife, von Harnack, von Scheliha and seventy-eight others were executed.

Many, both at the time and since, criticized the "Gandhian" attitude of the Kreisau Kreis as squeamish. Many more, both within Germany and without, have objected to the reverence for the oath which long prevented anyone who had sworn personal allegiance to Hitler from plotting against him. Certainly, the ambivalence caused by the Christian pacifism and the loyalty to oath in so many of the members of the German Resistance may well have caused the psychosomatic failure of all its efforts.

Contemporary Germans think of these efforts—if they ever do—only as a series of abortive efforts, of ammunition that didn't go off, and supplies that never came. Many disagreed too with the sabotage of ammunition and supplies for the front, and with the giving of information to the enemy. General Oster, for example, gave the Dutch military attaché in Berlin details of the invasion of the Netherlands, even to the exact date, and others passed on similarly important information.

Some young Germans today ask why none of the conspirators had the guts simply to pull out a pistol and shoot Hitler, although others realize the regime was too deeply entrenched for things to be quite as simple as that. Still others today criticize the *Putsch* people for folding up just because Stauffenberg's bomb failed to kill Hitler on July 20th itself. Most of the key positions were already in the hands of his opponents, and they had nothing to lose and everything to gain by going on, instead of like dilly dilly ducklings waiting or coming to be killed, or even obligingly committing suicide. For neither Speer who loved him, nor Staffenberg who hated him, succeeded in killing Hitler—and one must ask why?

AT the time the New York *Herald Tribune* predicted that "Americans, as a whole, will not feel sorry that the bomb saved Hitler." Yet had the plotters succeeded, many lives, Allied and German, would have been saved, for there is no question but that the "breakers" would have made instant overtures for peace. Then Germany could have felt that her own efforts had set her house in order and her democracy would have been home-grown, watered with the blood of the Resistance martyrs, instead of imposed from without, and envenomed by the Rajnovak blood bath of the Berlin bunker.

Heinrich von Kleist, in Napoleon's day, wrote that "the necessity of creating out of the personal venture of men's will alone the responsible, free choice of each single human conscience is the nucleus of all political existence, for freedom is not only an interior postulate, but a political one." Adam von Trott, commenting on this in his doctoral thesis added, "because conscience does not command submission to any kind of order, for the sake of order as such, it commands man's responsible collaboration in creating that order which is in accordance with the direct consciousness of man's divine destiny. Kleist and his Michael Kohlhaas became rebels, not because rebellion was an element in their life, but because they saw this divine destiny injured."

Of the *Putsch* people Father Reuss said: "Even those few who were politicians and planners when they lived, at the end died as Christians." They died, ten years ago, to prevent that ghastly human mutation, "Hitler in ourselves." May they rest in peace.

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THE SCREEN

SURVIVAL OF THE PHFFFTEST

NO doubt the greatest trial for Robinson Crusoe was loneliness. He could survive a shipwreck, learn how to build a fire on his deserted island, grow wheat, make coarse bread, even become a potter of sorts—but he could not, as the years passed, become reconciled to loneliness. The death of his dog, during the fourteenth year on the island, was a dreadful blow to the courageous man, and by the time he saved Friday from the cannibals in the nineteenth year, Crusoe was a touch wacky. Who wouldn't be after so many years in solitary? So it's no wonder that in his efforts to civilize Friday, Robinson considers the man-eating black savage more as a prospective slave than as a friend and companion.

All this is interestingly presented in "Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," an English-language film made in Mexico under the direction of Luis Bunuel—so interesting in fact that one wonders why Hollywood studios (not at all averse to all-male casts) haven't come up with a version of the fascinating Defoe story in recent years.

Irish Dan O'Herlihy is an excellent choice for the busy lead role. Except for a couple of dream-flashbacks, which could very well have been omitted, Director Bunuel makes it easy for the moviegoer to put himself in Crusoe's place; and O'Herlihy's solid, unpretentious performance helps the illusion. Crusoe's problems become yours, so do his victories and appalling loneliness. And you're pretty proud of yourself until that eventful day of the footprint in the sand when Friday (James Fernandez) turns up. Of course you have the advantage of a couple of centuries of social improvement, so your treatment of Friday would no doubt be different. Although the Pathecolor in the film is a bit gaudy at times, the photography throughout is excellent; and on the whole "Adventures of Robinson Crusoe" will appeal to adults as much as or maybe even more than it does to children.

ANOTHER film that highlights the white man's treatment of the so-called savage is "Apache," a handsomely photographed Technicolor opus based on the factual story of Massai, an Indian who refused to give up when Geronimo surrendered in 1886. In a way the white men are the villains of the piece and their handling of their red-skinned prisoners shows their misunderstanding of a conquered people. (We didn't have the advantage then of the ideas put forth by *A Bell for Adano* and *The Teahouse of the August Moon.*)

As played by Burt Lancaster with grim gusto, Massai gives his pursuers plenty of trouble and when he escapes from his captors, who are taking him from the West to a Florida prison, he sees enough of civilization in St. Louis to make him more determined than ever to continue his one-man war on the U.S. Army. The excitement he kicks up back on the reservation makes the Army equally determined.

Director Robert Aldrich and scriptwriter James R. Webb have packed "Apache" with thrills, but their film runs relentlessly in one sullen key. Fortunately there is no attempt to sentimentalize the "noble savage," but while the audience may admire this realism and Massai's strong-willed fight for survival, they may also tire of Lancaster's glum countenance and the way he pushes around the Indian girl (Jean Peters) who loves him in spite of everything. You have to approach "Apache" with reservations.

ANOTHER survival-of-the-fittest story is told in "Garden of Evil," an exciting outdoor drama that was beautifully photographed in Technicolor with stunning shots of Mexico stretching across the wide CinemaScope screen. There are also a lot of people stretching across the screen during the course of the plot in which Susan Hayward hires Gary Cooper, Richard Widmark, Cameron Mitchell and a Mexican (Victor Manuel Mendoza) to go with her into the hinterland to rescue her husband (Hugh Marlowe) from the gold mine where he is imprisoned. Unfortunately this story has a tarnished quality which somehow cannot be brightened by the good cast, the fine scenery or the script's flippant wisecracks.

Which of these people will survive the trip made doubly perilous by Indians and their own greed? Since Susan is the only woman in the crowd, you can be sure she'll come through. And since Widmark's performance as the cynical cardsharp is so amusing, you hope he'll last. However, in spite of the fact that strong, tight-lipped Gary Cooper acts throughout most of the film as if he were doing a caricature of all his previous roles, you'd be smart to bet on him. Every time he shoots he gets an Indian. "Garden of Evil" is by no means dull; but what you want is to get out of it alive.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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An Absolutely Impossible Militia

HOWARD R. SIMPSON

SOUTH of Hanoi, the largest city in North Viet Nam, lies a large flat agricultural area known as the Delta. This area is the "Ricebowl of Viet Nam" and has been the scene of some the heaviest fighting in the Indochina war. The Delta area is a series of swamps, low-lying rice paddies, and intersecting streams. The monotony of the landscape is sometimes broken by sawtooth ranges that rise abruptly out of the flat land. Each village is raised above the water level and surrounded by a series of crude dikes that also serve as footpaths.

The Franco-Vietnamese forces are constantly engaged in bitter fighting with Viet Minh regular, regional and guerilla troops for the control of this area. The Communists infiltrate into key Delta positions, from which they then mount attacks on the various strong points established by the French and Vietnamese. As the burden of establishing and maintaining these posts immobilizes French and Vietnamese regulars, better used elsewhere, the Franco-Vietnamese command has organized and equipped irregular troops, young men from the Delta villages, to man the scattered posts and to fight the Communist-led Viet Minh. Uneducated, mostly undisciplined, and with little formal military training, these peasant-soldiers have come up with small, but surprising victories against the Communists.

Particularly effective have been the Catholic Militia units formed in the predominantly Catholic areas of the Delta. Spurred on by Communist attacks on their religion these irregulars have been a particular thorn in the side of Communist troops attempting to move into the Catholic-held areas.

Because of its unorthodox methods and lack of military discipline the Militia has often posed a problem for the regular officers in command of military zones. It was one of these officers, a Captain in command of a regular infantry battalion of the Vietnamese national army, whose jeep jerked through the mud holes of a Delta road and approached the Militia post of Tan Khe on a grey morning in December of 1953—Christmas Eve morning.

THE young commander of Militia met the Captain's jeep about three hundred yards from the position. The Captain, a short, wizened Tonkinese, wrapped in a heavy army overcoat, returned the young officer's salute and shook hands with him. The Captain was not enjoying his assignment. As a battalion commander he had a whole battalion to take care of—and one that had taken heavy losses in the last month and that might have to take the same losses and still survive in the next.

But as the highest ranking Vietnamese army officer in the immediate area, the Captain had been ordered to visit Tan Khe in order to convey the congratulations of the Vietnamese government and army to the gallant garrison, which had beat off a particularly violent attack by Communist regulars three nights past. It was Christmas eve, and in the Captain's pocket was a gift of one thousand piastres for the garrison of Tan Khe—donated by the local Catholic Bishop.

The Captain walked toward the position and as he walked, the Captain rehearsed in his mind the speech he would have to make.

He glanced sideways at the young Militia officer. There was no doubt about it. The man was without education. He had the heavy hands and the slow walk of the Delta peasant. He was barefooted, dressed in black, and, like most Catholics of the area, wore a cross hanging from a chain around his neck. He is also very nervous, the Captain thought; for him my visit makes this a great day.

As they reached the first apron of barbed wire a cold breeze lifted off the Delta and brought with it a powerful stench. The Captain's aide stopped for a second, wiped his nose, and looked at his superior. The Militia commander evidently took no notice.

As soon as they entered the first line of dugouts and trenches, the cause of the odor was obvious. On the other side of the outpost, where the wire stretched down to a shallow sluggish stream, five scarecrow-like objects hung suspended a short height off the ground. The Captain made a rapid calculation. The attack on the post had been three nights ago. Therefore the five corpses had hung on the wire for three nights and two days.

The Captain was jolted from his train of thought by the high, discordant notes of a bugle as they came around the corner of the main bunker within the post. In the middle of a muddy, open space among the rifle pits, the garrison troops were drawn up for inspection.

Mr. Simpson, a United States press officer, wrote this description of the Indochina war before the recent Franco-Vietnamese withdrawal around Hanoi.

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To the left of their ranks, a bent pole served as a color standard. From it flew the Vietnamese national colors and the flag of the local Catholic Militia.

The Captain walked to the center of the unit, turned toward them and saluted. His professional eye traveled along the first rank. A tall non-commissioned officer, badly in need of a haircut and with British-style canvas leggings strapped on over bare feet; a young villager with a heavy grey wool sweater and an American Thompson submachine gun; two men uniformed in faded blue, one young, the other old, and each with a German Mauser rifle. They ran true to form—a typical Militia unit.

The Captain walked slowly along the second and third ranks, then, returning to the front, he saluted the post commander and shook his hand. Once again the heavy, sweet stench rolled across the post. Something has to be done about that, the Captain thought.

The position was long and low. It extended along the back of an unused levee, and the rifle pits and automatic weapons positions were dug into the clay-like ground on each side of a central communications trench that ran the lengh of the post. The main bunker stood in the center of the position. At the far end of the post there had been a second bunker, but all that remained was a tangled heap of cracked cement and mud. The position was filthy, both inside and out. Tin cans, papers, shell cases, garbage, was scattered among the rifle pits and cases of grenades lay open to the weather.

The Captain, his aide, and the post commander moved between the rifle pits toward the destroyed bunker. In doing so they came still closer to the five corpses on the wire. The post commander described the attack on the bunker. Under cover of darkness the Viet Minh had worked their way through the water at the base of the levee. Fifty feet from the wire they had began a tunnel that cut through the soft mud until it reached the base of the bunker. There they had exploded their charge of TNT, knocking out the bunker and signaling the general attack.

The three men stood on the top of the destroyed bunker and looked out over the Delta. In the distance the rough granite mountains of the Calcaire range rose from the haze. To the right, the nearest village was marked by the spire of its roofless Catholic cathedral. Using his binoculars, the Captain could see the nearest post with the faint color-splashes of the French tricolor flying over it.

Turning to the post commander, the Captain motioned him toward the wire. As they approached the effigy-like corpses, a rush of wings made them hestitate. Each corpse seemed to launch a dozen crows into the sky and then the Captain saw that with their departure the corpses had lost much of their bulk.

The commander walked to one of the gruesome dead and kicked the lolling skull with his bare foot. Several of the teeth, loosened by the drying action of the sun, fell to the ground. The commander turned to the Captain with a grin. "These are the ones who tried to breach the wire directly in front of our automatic rifle," he said. The Captain's aide stood by the wire, silent, with a handkerchief held over his mouth and nose. There was no doubt that three more days on the wire with the crows and the sun would kill the stench, leaving nothing but bleached bones.

The group walked back to the headquarters bunker and sat down inside on some low wooden benches. It was cold in there. Tin-foil stars hung over the crude table in the center of the room. A Militia soldier with a German Schmeisser machine-pistol hanging on his chest opened two bottles of warm beer, and the post commander poured hot tea into some fingerstained, cracked glasses. The Captain's aide prepared the bamboo water pipe he carried in a map case and handed it to the Captain. A plate of beef wrapped in rice-paper and cooked over an open fire was placed in the center of the table and the men helped themselves.

The Captain took a long draw from his bamboo pipe, letting the strong smoke rest in his nostrils to drive out the lingering smell of the corpses on the wire. Then he began, addressing the post commander.

"Lan Phuc," he said, "I have come here in behalf of the national government of Viet Nam and his majesty Bao Dai to congratulate you and your men for the heroic defense of your post against the attacking rebels. I also want to add the appreciation of the Vietnamese national army and of my battalion in particular."

The post commander shifted uneasily in his seat and looked at his hand.

The Captain continued: "I also bring to you and your men Christmas blessings and good wishes from the Bishop, as well as this token of his appreciation." He handed the rolled notes that totaled one thousand piastres to Lan Phuc, the post commander. The heavy peasant hands took the notes and turned them over and over. Probably the first time he has seen so much money, the Captain thought.

There was one more surprise in store for Lan Phuc. The Captain sent his aide to the jeep to bring the bottle of cognac that lay wrapped in a blanket between the front seats. When he came, the Captain had not been too sure that he was going to offer his good Christmas cognac to the post commander, but now he had changed his mind. He was beginning to like this quiet peasant. In fact, he wished he had more officers like him in his own battalion. More steaming beef was brought

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to the table. The three men sat and drank cognac out of the dirty glasses and talked of Christmas, the war, and the difficulty of obtaining arms and ammunition.

As the Captain was about to leave, he paused in the doorway of the bunker. "Tell me," he said, "why is it you have not buried the ones on the barbed wire?"

The post commander looked puzzled for a moment then broke into a smile. "I have left the garbage like that to teach the peasants what happens to the bad ones," he said.

The Captain took off his cap and pushed back the straight black hair over his thin skull. "I see," he said, "but since tomorrow is Christmas and you and your men are all Catholics, I think it would be fitting to bury those corpses. Although they were rebels they probably came from this district and, if they did, they are probably Catholics like the rest of us."

The post commander looked puzzled. "Catholics like the rest of us?" he repeated. He had never thought of the enemy in this light, and the notion vaguely disturbed him.

"Anyway, I suggest you bury them as soon as possible," the Captain said. He did not want to order the post commander in any way, as it was really not his affair, but he put as much emphasis on the suggestion as possible.

The post commander nodded in what the Captain took to be agreement, and they all walked out again into the sun. Then the Captain's aide found he had forgotten his carbine in the bunker and had to return for it. The Captain cursed in the Tonkinese dialect and made a sign of disgust; the post commander grinned in understanding.

The men of the post were scattered about the interior of the position. Some cleaned their weapons, others improved their rifle pits with mud shoveled up from the stream at the base of the wire. Two men were working on a papier-maché star of Bethlehem, while another crouched over a figure which was supposed to represent Jesus but with every stroke of the paint brush looked more like an ancient Vietnamese mandarin. The post commander accompanied the Captain and his aid to their jeep. On a last-minute impulse, the Captain handed his half-empty bottle of cognac to the heavy-handed peasant officer. They shook hands. As they drove off, the Captain, holding his nose in feigned disgust, pointed to the corpses on the wire and made a downward gesture with his thumb. The post commander grinned and waved goodbye.

CHRISTMAS morning broke over the Delta with a steel-grey light. To the North the mountains floated above a heavy ground mist, and the colorful paper ornaments hanging in front of the Churches were ripped and battered by wind-driven morning rain. The Captain sat in his command post sipping at a steaming cup of tea. There were weary deep-purple rings under his eyes, and his hands shook as they moved over the table. Two field telephones hung on the wall directly behind his chair, and his Colt automatic held down a corner of the map that lay in front of him. Somewhere far off across the rice paddies the steady thump of artillery greeted the Christmas day.

It had happened as he had guessed. Returning from his visit to the Militia unit he had made his battalion ready for an attack. And the Communists had come at three o'clock in the morning. But not against the weakest company, the company he had reinforced, but against what had been the strongest company, the company from which he had drawn the reinforcements. The fighting had been short and sharp. He now had three dead on his hands for Christmas day, and five wounded were on their way to the base town of Phat Diem for treatment.

In a corner of the room his aide sat hunched over a battered typewriter making out a report on the action. From time to time he sniffed and wiped his nose on the back of his sleeve. "He is an annoying young man," thought the Captain, "but he can type." The battalion command post was in a two-story building in the center of the village which had once belonged to a rich Chinese merchant but was now neglected, gardenless, and shell-pocked. The windows were sandbagged, and the backyard was a mass of barbed wire. On the roof were two .30 caliber machine-gun emplacements commanding the main street of the village and the rear approaches to the house. The village itself straggled out along a river, with brick and cement houses around a central market place where Tonkinese women with lacquered black teeth and black headpieces argued over chickens, pigs, and vegetables.

His battalion was scattered over too wide an area, the Captain thought. The worst attack of all had come a little over a month ago. One of the companies had dug in around a large house on the outskirts of the village. The enemy had used nothing heavier than mortars before, so the company commander, with the assent of the battalion commander, had based his defense on the house which was of solid brick, with thick walls. The defenders had sealed up the windows to form fire ports for rifles and machine guns, and sandbags were piled around the communications equipment. Then the Communists came with recoilless rifles and punched hole after hole in the brick walls. The company commander and his second-in-command had been killed in the first flash of firing. The men, knocked off balance by this new method of attack, had fallen back to the main street of the village with the Viet Minh yelling on their heels. Only by calling in artillery on one end of the village and counter-attacking with his headquarters company and some

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local Militia was the Captain able to break up the attack.

The Captain stared at the map. His companies were marked in red and the enemy in blue. "They should be red to match their flag and politics," he thought. Then he settled down to work again.

THEY picked up the priest at noon after driving for three hours through a steady drizzle over the mud-rutted road. He was a short, stocky Belgian, with a black beard spiked with grey, carrying a pack on his back and wearing a Basque beret pulled forward over his forehead. He shook hands with the Captain and his aide and with the sergeant who drove the jeep.

As they jolted back toward the battalion the Captain talked with the priest, answering his questions on the Christmas eve attack. Once the jeep stuck in a mud-filled hole, and all the men climbed out while the driver struggled with the four-wheel drive. When that didn't help the Captain, his aide, and the priest, with his habit hitched up and tucked in his belt, pushed together, slipping and sliding in the mud.

Finally, with the jeep back on the road, they climbed, panting, back into their seats. The priest reached forward, fumbled in the pack at his feet and produced a bottle of *Kirch*. Smiling he passed it to the Captain. The bottle then made the complete round of the jeep before it went back into the pack.

Christmas Mass was to be at four in the afternoon. There could be no Midnight Mass because of security. A small altar had been set up in the mud-walled, shell-battered building that stood in the middle of the company position. The small central room had been decorated with strips of colored paper, papier-maché stars, and crosses made out of tin foil. To the rear of the room stood the altar, constructed of ammunition boxes and covered with a worn altar cloth. Two up-ended rifle grenades, minus fuses, acted as candle sticks. Hanging over the altar a plump infant Jesus made of paper grimaced down on the hastily gathered benches with a wall-eyed simplicity. The wives and children of the battalion's riflemen were crowding into the narrow space, pushing and arguing over the seats. The front bench was left empty for the battalion commander and his family. To the left of the altar a small, foot-manipulated organ leaned forward unsteadily.

As the Mass got underway, the Captain and his family made their way to the front bench. The captain held his youngest son between his legs with a gentle pressure of his knee. His hands held a battered missal. He read with a barely perceptible movement of his lips, and occasionally his eyes flicked up to the priest to check his place. The Captain's wife sat with her head bowed and a rosary moving through her fingers. She was a tired peasant woman, beaten down with childbearing, hard work, and the war, the everlasting war.

The small children crowded at the priest's feet, adding a special dash of color with their newly acquired berets. A truckload of supplies had come from Phat Diem and among them had been many red and blue berets, part of the Christmas issue for soldier's families. Now the tiny shaved heads flashed with color as they looked up open-mouthed at the priest or turned and stared at the Captain and his son.

The organ wheezed into action and four soldiers, their black hair slicked down tight and shining, sang the ancient songs of the Catholic Church in their own Vietnamese version. The altar boy, a greying non-commissioned officer, moved slowly, and as he knelt his hobnailed boots stuck out at odd angles from under the black altar-boy's costume.

Outside the rain fell splattering on the muddy ground. Looking out the door of the makeshift church, one could see the forms of the three canvas-covered dead lying on the litters, waiting the ministrations of the priest and burial. A gust of wind lifted the canvas on one litter and exposed a hand lifted, palm up, toward the rain. Far off across the Delta the artillery continued to growl, celebrating Christmas in its own way.

FOUR days later, the Captain's battalion accompanied by three armored cars from a Foreign Legion unit passed the post of Tan Khe on its way to a mopping-up operation in another sector. The Captain, riding in his jeep behind the second armored car, was busy going over a map with a Legion officer, a bearded Frenchman from Marseilles. As the jeep lurched over the rough road, the Captain's aide leaned forward and tapped the Captain on the shoulder, pointing toward the post.

The faded Vietnamese flag and the Catholic banner whipped straight out in the morning breeze. The sun bounced off the wire, making it sparkle like a decoration. They were still there. Near the mound of the destroyed bunker the Captain could make out the ragged shapes of the corpses, much smaller now, the shredded clothing blowing in the wind. The Captain felt a surge of anger, his lips tightened. "Damned Militia," he mumbled. "Absolutely impossible." The Legion officer looked up questioningly for a second, then seeing the Captain's expression he returned to the map.

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Spiritual Freedom Linked to Political Liberty

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN WORLD AFFAIRS. Edited by Waldemar Gurian and M. A. Fitzsimons. Notre Dame Press. $4.25.

By JOSEPH N. MOODY

"WHAT the nineteenth century did not forsee has happened today: it is the mission of Catholics to defend the true values of secular civilization and of its liberties against secularist pseudo-religions. . . . The Catholicism of today is able to defend secular civilization because the Church rejects its deification and is therefore aware of its true human character." The man who penned these words in the Introduction to this volume has died since their publication. But they remain as his epitaph. This book reminds us how much American scholarship owes to the late Waldemar Gurian.

A symposium of this sort can be evaluated from two viewpoints: the competence of the individual contributors and the unification of their efforts around a central theme. Professor Gurian's world-wide contacts has assured a first-rate team of collaborators which include Father John Courtney Murray, Monsignor Harry Koenig, Yves Simon, Heinrich Rommen, and Adrian Dansette. The integration of their work is somewhat less successful, and the volume may be considered as a brilliant series of essays on important issues in modern Catholicism. This relative looseness of articulation is common to all joint efforts and does not detract from the value of the book under review.

The Catholic Church in World Affairs would be worth the purchase price for Father Murray's essay "On the Structure of the Church-State Problem" alone. Up to the present, the contributions of this pioneering Jesuit in the field of Church-State relations have not appeared in a single volume, but must be sought in scholarly journals of limited circulation. This essay, which incorporates his basic positions, emphasizes the traditional teaching on the two sources of social power, the spiritual and the temporal, and traces the tension introduced into Western civilization by this Christian concept. While the doctrinal foundations of Church-State relations have not changed, their institutional realizations have always been dependent upon historical factors so that we cannot speak of an "ideal" once achieved and now lost. There has never been an ideal solution, but a series of more or less successful attempts to establish a balance between the authority of Caesar and that of God. One very fruitful experiment is found in modern America, where the human person, citizen both of the Church and of the Republic, is free to act and to influence public policy by the persuasive presentation of the truth. This is different from Church-State arrangements of the past, but is in keeping with contemporary realities: "Today the spiritual freedom of the Church seems everywhere linked with the political freedom of the people and to that limitation of governmental power by the right of the human person, which is of the essence of the liberal tradition, entrenched in it by its long alliance with the Christian tradition. Under the conditions created by the decadence of liberal tradition into Liberalism, Christianity could at least live. But the experience of Communist-dominated lands seems to have demonstrated that Christianity cannot long hope even to live in this world, if the liberal tradition that was its secular support is altogether cancelled out in history."

Professor Rommen's treatment of "The Church and Human Rights" is of equal pertinence. He explores the more recent developments in the age-long problem of man versus the State. The classic formulation of human rights in the Declaration of the Rights of Man in the French Revolution was aimed at an *ancien régime* of privilege, paternalism, and a mercantilist "planned economy". The experience of the last century and a half, particularly in the social field, has revealed the defects in this charter of human freedom. But the principles themselves grew in a soil prepared by the Christian concept of universal fraternity and were slowly matured over long centuries by Catholic thinkers and men of action. There have been conflicts in their interpretation but ". . . the French Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1789, voted by the bishops and the clergy of France, and the modern Bills of Rights from that of 1688 to those of the new constitutions enacted in many countries after the Second World War contain no phrase, no word that expressly and necessarily implies a negation of Catholic doctrines." Today the rise of the totalitarian state has given the idea of fundamental human rights a powerful validation. "No religious community has suffered more than the Church in the totalitarian states, because the latter better recognize the Church's defense of human rights than do its detractors in the democracies."

The nine studies on the position of the Church in various national areas are generally good. It is a pleasure to report that the two on the United States, by Father McEvoy and Professor Abell, are particularly valuable as thoughtful estimates of the role of Catholicism in American society. M. Dansette, who has written a fine two-volume study of the Church in contemporary France, attempts the difficult feat of synopsis into a single chapter. While the essay lacks the nuances of his fuller study, it is packed with information for the American reader and provides an informed introduction by an expert to the striking religious developments of modern French Catholicism. It is a cavil to note that a translators' slip has the Chamber falling in April, 1925.

The essays on Germany and Italy give a reasonable summary of the status of the Church in these two strategic areas. That on the missions is particularly stimulating. Professor Tieme's chapter on contemporary continental Protestantism

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covers ground that most readers will find informative.

There would be general agreement that the essay on Spain is the poorest stylistically, probably because of the translation. This reviewer would pass the same verdict on its content. There are valid grounds for wide divergence of opinion on Church-State relations in Spain, but the conjunction of Hispanidad and universality, the constant use of "Crusade" to describe the Civil War, and the justification of the status of Protestants by citing the need of religious *and* political unity is simply irritating. I found myself happy to be an American as I read: "This is the way one should understand words quoted by the Cardinal [Segura], so misunderstood, *especially in the United States*: certain repressions are necessary when the erroneous conscience does not deserve respect because of entering 'into conflict with the righteous conscience and the common good'." Yet the divergencies of development under the impact of contingent historical factors illustrates the importance of Father Murray's thesis, which is the core of this book.

Irish Folk

SCHOOL FOR HOPE. By Michael McLaverty. Macmillan. $3.50.

By ELIZABETH BARTELME

IRELAND, where the cultivation of the Gaelic tongue is a fierce national undertaking, has the curious distinction of nurturing writers whose work in English is equal, and at times superior, to that of their British or American counterparts. The masterpieces of Joyce and O'Casey scarcely need be mentioned so secure is their place in English letters. Frank O'Connor's sharp-elbowed, soft-tongued characters have their own special life of wit and tears. The spell of words is rooted deep in the Irish character and the Irish writers know the magical quality of language.

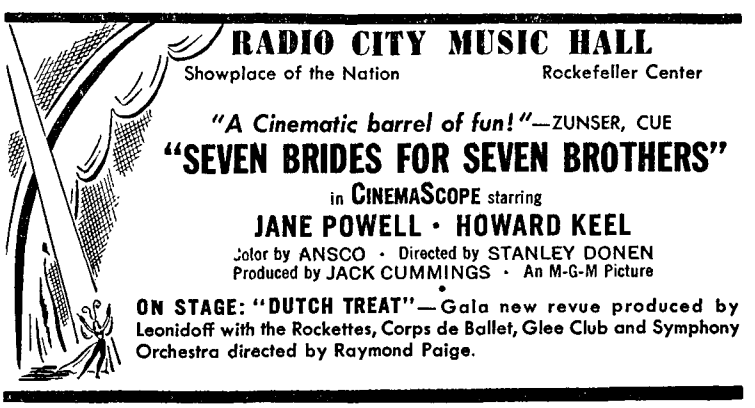
Michael McLaverty, while hardly a peer of Joyce and O'Casey, has demonstrated his possession of this gift in his earlier novels and short stories. *School for Hope* once again displays the graphic quality of his talent and his sure command of country speech. His quiet story, however, falls short of his best work. It is thin fare indeed.

On the surface this is a love story. Essentially the theme is concerned with the passion for personal security of a selfish, willful woman. Nora Byrne, dogged by a family history of tuberculosis, accepts a teaching position in an Irish village. Her affections are quickly engaged by the kindly women with whom she lives, then more deeply by Peter Lynch, the schoolmaster. The progress of the gentle love affair is impeded by the lively resentment of Peter's elder sister toward Nora, a resentment culminating in an active hatred which is almost disastrous to the happiness of the lovers.

Helen Lynch's warped personality is an interesting study. She is a woman willing to perpetrate malice in any sphere so long as it ensures the preservation of her comfortable life. The development of her assault upon Nora from initial annoyance at her brothers' attentions to his pretty assistant, through the petty ruses she uses to distract him, to the final savage scene in which her hatred is displayed in all its ugliness is handled artfully.

The flaw of the novel is that Helen is consistently robbed of the center of the stage which is hers by dramatic right. Nora, whose personality is as pallid as her complexion, occupies this position, and Nora and her Peter are just plain dull. Their interminable conversations about music or schoolroom problems are somewhat less than stimulating; Nora's preoccupation with her medical history even more tiresome. There is a bloodlessness about these two that effectively deadens any interest in the outcome of Helen's schemings.

Mr. McLaverty has an indisputable flair for characterization. Helen, Mary and Elizabeth Devlin, the schoolboy McGuire, the teachers Brennan and Murphy are all vital, engaging people. Their talk is live-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ly, their personalities individual. In this vivid gallery, Nora and Peter are remarkable for their lack of color.

Previously, and again in *School for Hope,* the author has shown his understanding of the waywardness of human personality. He has delved expertly into the passions which destroy and misshape the outwardly normal life. It is unfortunate that his undeniable ability and his feel for language have not enabled him to rise above the ordinary in this presentation.

Sampler

MODERN ITALIAN SHORT STORIES. Edited by Marc Slonim. Simon and Schuster. $5.

By SERGE HUGHES

IT is some years now since Italian novels were first discovered here, with much talk of an Italian renaissance of letters. That enthusiastic greeting has now fizzled out. Nor could the uncritical enthusiasm shown for the works of Levi and Berto and Pratolini have long endured, because that enthusiasm did not stem from a serene reading of the works themselves but from other motives. We were interested not so much in a literary revival as in political reassurances or political literature which proved to our satisfaction that Fascism was bad and that gradually the more intelligent people were coming around to our point of view. It happened that some very fine novels said as much politically and we made the mistake of thinking they were very fine novels merely for that reason.

We were also rather proud of the fascination our stories of action and sex had for Europe and welcomed, with the obvious relish of recognition, writers such as Moravia, who was for us a fine writer following a familiar American pattern of decay, corruption, violence, sex, and some kind of nihilism, occasionally hysterical, occasionally unperceptive, always tragic. And so it came about that gifted artists such as Emilio Cecchi, Mario Soldati and Dino Buzzati have remained completely unknown to us, and when introduced to American readers have met with conspicuous lack of success. Mario Soldiati's *Dinner with the Commendatore,* three fine short stories, was recognized by a few literary critics as something quite good but it met no American reading public. The same indifference met *The Tartar Steppe* by Dino Buzzati, one of the major European novels of our time. And so risky has become the translation of anything that does not deal with postwar political implications in narrow terms that American publishers have shied away from everything that cannot receive some kind of a political stamp.

Since a number of Italian novelists who are not well known here are among Italy's most gifted short-story writers, the inclusion of their work in this collection should be of real value. It is good that we discover such outstanding talents as those of Gianna Manzini, a Virginia Woolf type of writer; of Mario Soldati; of Emilio Ceechi; of others whom the reader will discover here. The absence of one author, however, stands out in this collection: Natalia Ginzsberg, perhaps the most gifted woman writer in Italy today. Let us hope that her exclusion from this collection of short stories was not dictated by her acknowledged Communist ties.

In general, the translations are done well, and the introductory pages to the various periods from the last half of the nineteenth century to the period from Futurism to Fascism and down to the contemporaries are useful.

South Wind

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TREE. By LeRoy Leatherman. Harcourt, Brace. $3.

By DORIS GRUMBACH

HERE is a young Southerner who writes as if he had never heard all the talk about the art of the novel, its norms, the logistics of plot, and all the critical folderol that often manages to obscure the unique qualities a novel may possess. His writing has the natural self-forgetfulness of a young child talking to himself; his story flows so effortlessly from the invisible crevices of motive and compulsion that the armature of construction is often lost to the reader. The writer's literary relatives (of the Southern school) bear him a close family resemblance, and his friends in the same tradition (Capote, Welty, Williams) will recognize his allegiance, but in his best moments he stands aside from them, and is something different, unique, alone.

This is no mean achievement. Miss Ida and Miss Lilly, Mr. Ed and Jacob Sidney, old man Field and the young Rough Rider Joe Wainwright, Mr. Robert and Mr. Ed: these are the inhabitants of an indistinguished moment in time, the sultry summer day in 1899, when all the local tensions and clannish passions of that small place and those small people clash irrevocaby, changing even what had seemed predestined, and giving new matter for the reveries of their sons and grandsons. Years later Jim Daigre comes up from New Orleans to spend a summer vacation, as his family always has done, in the Big Creek area, and with the airs and breaths of old hates and livid passions still about him, moving almost in a dream of re-creation, he works out the overfull emotions of his seventeen years. His maturity, the bridge between Miss Ida's passion and his lost Lochinvar-illusions, is the time span of the novel, but the order of telling is secondary to the wonderful, easy shuttling back and forth between immutable *temps perdu* and the full pain of last night's rejection.

These people are much more than mere pegs for the plot or pieces of coulisse for the scenery. Each one is full and tall and grounded in a multitude of evocative detail. Mr. Leatherman can produce character out of the mists of wasted time or under the strong light of unchecked emotion. His story hangs on these portraits of wasted and exhausted Southern lives, and yet the people walk out of the requirements of plot as naturally as Stanislavsky actors impro-

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vising, and it becomes hard to separate the elements. This is perhaps an elaborate way of saying that Mr. Leatherman has written a first-rate novel, that he writes a strong, simple and persuasive prose, and that in the process he has succeeded in staking out a small, new corner of the well worked-over Southern territory.

Private Pity

THE WORLD IN THE EVENING. By Christopher Isherwood. Random House. $3.50.

By RICHARD HAYES

MR. Isherwood's talent—at its discreet and abstinent best, one of the pleasures of English fiction—here turns on a private emotional history deceptively enmeshed in a net of contemporary manners. The personal and the public, sensibility and fact, have always, in Mr. Isherwood's fiction, joined with a special force, and it is troubling to report the lapse of that pressure in *The World in the Evening*: I do not imagine this novel will so securely hold the prestige of the earlier work. The perceptions which lie at its center—of love and friendship and sexuality, of the civil wars within the self — are flaccid and a little common, have not the moral density of this novelist's finest fiction; nor do his apprehensions of society impinge sharply on the mind. In its formal arrangement, *The World in the Evening* lacks intellectual power; in its feeling and tone, individual sensibility: these poverties are harshly mirrored in prose listlessly competent but eroded by temperateness, never incisive.

Yet this is a novel which curiously fixes the attention, possibly because one intuits beneath its banal surfaces the ruined design of something large, serious and subtle. That Mr. Isherwood may have attempted such a statement need not surprise: the assumptions of his fiction have always been of a melancholy, even tragic, import, and only the gestures in the foreground which divulged them were masked in gaiety. It is not indeed excessive to

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say of *Goodbye to Berlin, Prater Violet* and *The Memorial,* that they are criticisms of life, essays in its conduct: precisely this hard, sterling core of moral inquiry gives them their permanent worth. In *The World in the Evening,* Mr. Isherwood has again elected (though much more overtly, and with therefore less success) to pursue that investigation, and extend it by examining the actuality of simple humanistic goodness in the corruptions of time. He follows the figure of his hero—a nondescript Anglo-American quite exactly observed — from out of the lunatic Hollywood fringe one night and flees to the pastoral quiet of a Pennsylvania Quaker village. His moral house is in disorder: mocked by an adulterous wife, raddled with malice, spite and rancor, he falls banally into the conventional incapacitating accident which alone brings him to a point of calm. From that rise, he reviews his life, tries to determine its markings and shadings, and in the history of his first marriage to an older woman novelist finds the pattern of indulgence and betrayal in which he has been fixed.

Now here is an interesting, decisive theme: for one sees that the novel's actual concern is with the average middling sensual man, and the moral revisions age and experience write in his flesh. An uncommon, provocative subject, yet Isherwood touches it only peripherally, evades the pressure it seeks constantly to impose. This reluctance to submit his imagination to the implications of his theme divides the novel, and I would suggest that it springs from Isherwood's ambition—ill-advised however admirable in intent—to enlarge the consciousness which records his fictional experience. At the center of his finest stories stands the uncommitted "I"—one recalls the famous camera image—not of course quite passive (indeed selective and wary) yet neutral, dispassionate, a zone of exquisite moral poise in the midst of these irruptions of personality. The effect is possibly artificial, but it brilliantly *gathers* experience: how shapely and economical are, for instance, *The Berlin Stories,* whatever a various and diffuse range of life they encompass. In *The World in the Evening,* "I" is active, divided, subject as well as object, and the novel has consequently neither aesthetic nor intellectual coherence. Personalities impinge briefly on "I," then dissolve; but for a racy opening chapter, we are never directed here to society as a field of observation; in the experience with which the novel is concerned, there is small opportunity for that extravagant fantasy in which Isherwood has always excelled. in *Sally Bowles* or *Prater Violet,* we caught oblique, arresting glimpses of "I," but enjoyed the full force of his unclouded observation. Here, because the hero's eye so persistently turns inward, his perceptions are thick with the waste and slag of emotion—recrimination, confession, denial, all the vulgar *externalization* of feeling. The so carefully annotated record of the solicitations of his soul and his senses does not, sadly, interest us, and obscures what might have been a trenchant, personal account

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of American social experience.

Beyond this error in construction, however, it is possible to see the several failures of *The World in the Evening* as specific failures of language. In *Enemies of Promise,* his celebrated study of English writing *entre deux guerres,* Mr. Cyril Connolly anticipated this damaging possibility, foresaw how Isherwood's colloquial brilliance might betray him into a "fatal readability." And *The World in the Evening* is never less than readable: indeed, a bland cinematic wash of *expertise* overlays all its smooth and unexceptionable surfaces. Precisely this gloss, however, dilutes the impact of incident, blurs the individual coloring of character. Because of it, for example, the two women who so critically influence the hero's development fail of effect and conviction: one is never more than a garish figure in a Pennsylvania Dutch sampler, the other merely a rather Bloomsbury novelist, remotely suggestive of Mrs. Woolf or Katherine Mansfield, but quite deficient in their resilience of spirit and moral energy. And yet, so much that is featureless and commonplace in *The World in the Evening* cannot extinguish the authentic tone of Mr. Isherwood's voice: one catches it here in the unmistakable accents of humane sympathy; in the note of private feeling which suddenly, surprisingly reverberates; in the occasional echo of raillery, and the delicious sound of vanity expiring upon wit. That voice is quiescent in this novel, though not stilled; all it lacks is linguistic discipline and restraint, and a theme which will project it into the elegance, power and authority of art.

REVIEWERS

Father Joseph N. Moody is a priest of the Archdiocese of New York who teaches at Cathedral College.

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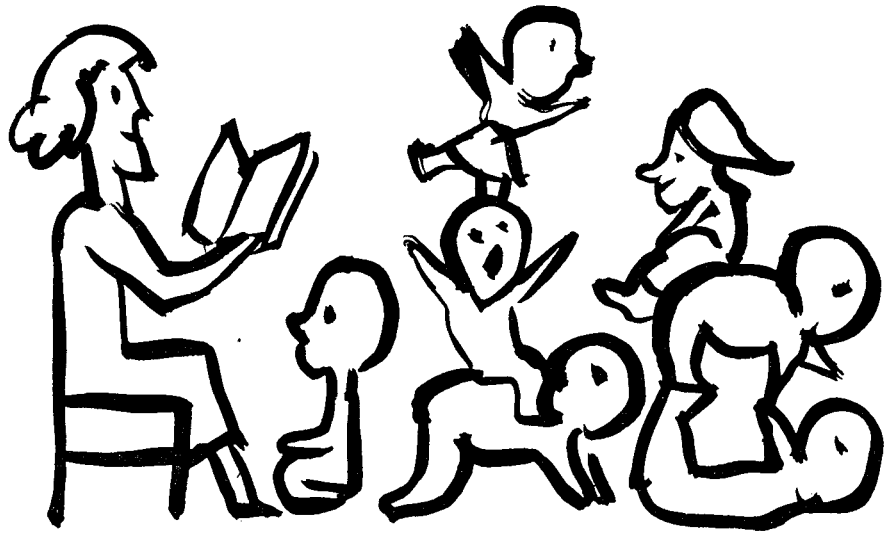

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